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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY

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(b)(3)

2 October 1958

USSR RESUMES NUCLEAR TEST ACTIVITY AT NOVAYA ZEMLYA

The US Atomic Energy Detection System has reported that two explosions occurred in the USSR at 0750 and 0955 hours Zebra (0350 and 0555 EDT) on 30 September, both in the vicinity of Novaya Zemlya. Signals

from both explosions have been reported by acoustic, seismic, and electromagnetic stations. A preliminary estimate of the yield of the first shot is in the range of 700 to 2,000 kilotons, with the most probable

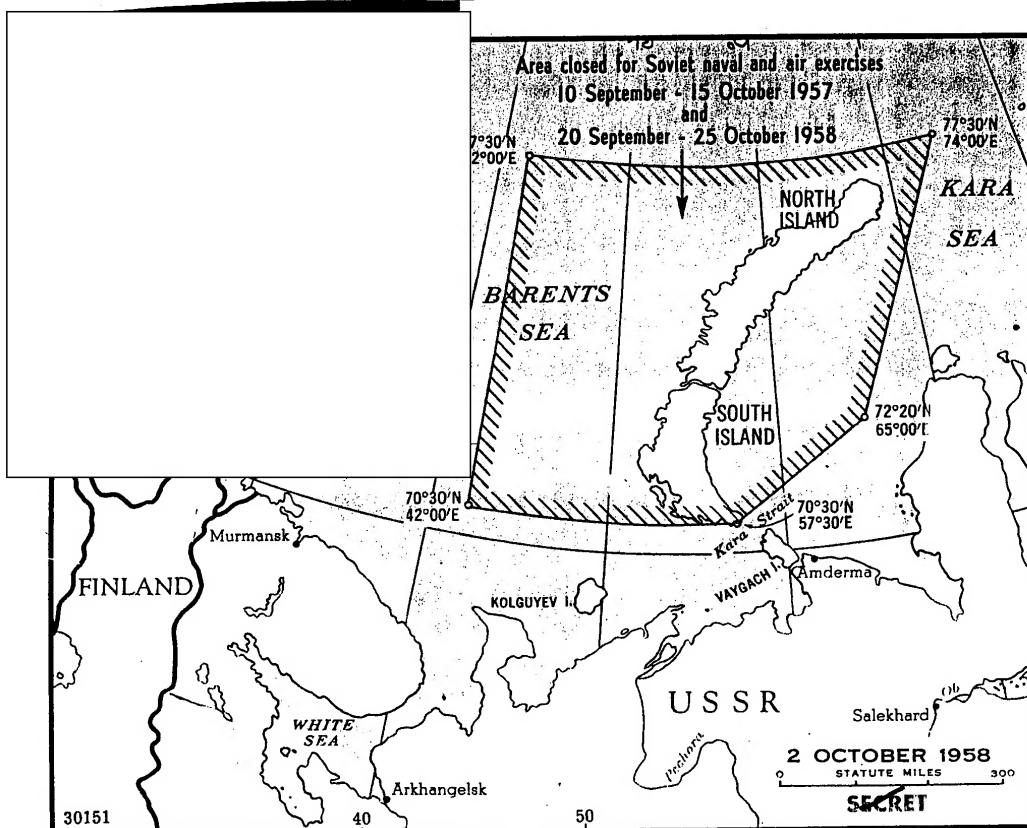
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value being about 1,000. For the second shot, the range is estimated at 700 to 7,000, with the most probable value being about 2,000 kilotons.

This is the third occasion in 1958 on which the Soviet Union has conducted two tests in a single day. On 27 February two tests were made within a three-hour period in the Novaya Zemlya area, and on 14 March a test at Novaya Zemlya and another at the Semipalatinsk proving grounds occurred within an hour.

The events of 30 September bring the total number of nuclear tests in the USSR to 57, twelve of which have been held in the Novaya Zemlya area, 42 at Semipalatinsk, and three at other locations.

The resumption of tests follows a carefully prepared propaganda campaign designed to place the blame for such Soviet action on continued American and British testing. On 1 October, the day after its resumption of tests, Moscow proposed in notes to the United States and Britain that the 31 October Geneva talks on an agreement for a cessation of nuclear tests be convened at the foreign ministers' level.

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While the notes avoid any threat of a boycott if this proposal is not accepted, the Soviet leaders probably anticipate that a rejection would have the effect of strengthening their charges that the United States and Britain are seeking to impede an agreement and would provide further justification for the USSR's current resumption of tests. The notes repeat Khrushchev's previous insistence that the purpose of the talks is to conclude an agreement on the "permanent" cessation of tests, suggesting that the Soviet delegation will seek to make this the key issue in the negotiations.

On the same day the USSR resumed testing, Soviet propa-

ganda cited recent tests in Nevada as further proof that the United States' announcement of its intention to suspend tests was "another propaganda trick designed to deceive public opinion."

It is expected the Soviet Union will conduct tests at a rapid pace, completing the present phase of testing at least by the start of the Geneva talks. Moscow then would be free to accept the Western proposal of a one-year temporary suspension if the Soviet leaders during the course of the talks calculated that such agreement were to the USSR's advantage. [REDACTED]

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